

Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6853 of November 30, 1995

The President

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For many young Americans, learning to drive is a significant step along the road to maturity and independence. There are serious responsibilities that accompany getting a driver's license, and it is essential to teach our youth—and all Americans—the terrible risks of drunk and drugged driving. Males aged 21-34 are among those most likely to drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and there is a critical need for additional prevention efforts aimed at this group.

Alcohol use played a role in 16,600 motor vehicle-related fatalities last year—nearly 41 percent of all such deaths. While the number of these tragedies has declined significantly over the past decade, the statistics are still devastating. We must continue our campaign of public education, provide increased law enforcement, and seek tougher laws and penalties for offenders.

Last June, I called on the Congress to make “Zero Tolerance” the law of the land and require States to adopt a Zero Tolerance standard for drivers under the age of 21. I am pleased that this provision was included in the “National Highway System Designation Act of 1995,” which I signed this week. It is already against the law for young people to consume alcohol, and Zero Tolerance creates a national standard that will make it effectively illegal for young people who have been drinking to drive an automobile.

Many States have already enacted Zero Tolerance laws. These laws work—alcohol-related crashes involving teenage drivers are down as much as 20 percent in those States. When all States have these laws, hundreds more lives will be saved and thousands of injuries will be prevented. I commend the Congress for heeding my call and making Zero Tolerance the standard nationwide for drivers under the age of 21.

I am also proud that citizens across the Nation are working to spread the word about the dangers of impaired driving. Vital partnerships have formed among Federal, State, and local government agencies, private businesses, and community groups. Last year, on December 15, many Americans observed “Lights on for Life Day” by driving with their headlights illuminated in remembrance of the victims of drunk and drugged driving. I hope that caring citizens will commemorate the same day this month, doing their part to help ensure a safe holiday season.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 1995, as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. I urge all Americans to recognize the dangers of impaired driving; to take responsibility for themselves, their guests, and their passengers; to stop anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol from getting behind the wheel; and to help teach children safe driving behavior.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William Clinton

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